764 dying in the evening or during the night is buried the next day, one dying in the morning will probably be interred by nightfall.

766 Burial customs for children differ from those of adults. The immediate burial of a dead child seems to be general in the villages, even if, according to one informant, it dies at 12 or 1 o'clock in the morning. With the death verified, relatives are called, and the child might be taken away within 15 minutes. Certain distinctions are made depending on whether (1) the child is still-born or dies shortly after birth, (2) the child is under 8 years old, and (3) the child is 8 years or older. A premature, still-born child, or an infant dying shortly after birth is buried almost immediately in the compound, usually behind the house. The child under eight is buried in a temporary grave near the family tomb, remaining there until the family tomb is opened upon the death of an adult. The infant's bones are then gathered up and put in the tomb. The temporary grave is prepared by a younger man of the family. The dead child is carried by the mother, an aunt or other female relative. The tomb, in general practice, is opened for a child over 8 years of age.

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These are general statements and the details vary. In Minatogawa, for example, a child's funeral is similar to an adult's, but the body is not put in the coffin until the tomb is reached. The mother, or a close female relative, carries it in her arms. The coffin is carried by other mourners. The explanation given is that it was formerly believed that the child might revive on the way. In a child's funeral here, there is no banner announcing the name and death date, at the head of the procession. Neither is a hearse or funeral palanquin (gan) used.

In Matsuda, this palanquin also is not used for children 8 and under. Whether a tomb is opened for a child seems to depend on individual family custom. In one case, an extended family tomb was not opened for a child; in another it was. The child is carried to the tomb and then placed in the coffin. In this village, children are not buried immediately. The custom is the same as for adults.

764 178 [793] Judging by descriptions which villagers gave of pre-war customs, funerals and burial customs have been simplified in the post-war period. The services of Buddhist priests have been almost completely dispensed with. Offerings are more modest. Priestesses (noro) and their assistants seldom officiate. The contemporary rural Okinawan funeral is simple. The following description of a funeral observed near Gushichan village probably is typical.

764 The deceased, a woman of 40, died about eleven in the morning. The funeral procession passed the village office at 5:30 on the same day. There were no special ceremonies before the funeral. The body, washed and dressed, had been placed in the coffin which was put on the funeral palanquin or hearse. This red palanquin is normally owned by the village. Since the war, not all villages have an gan.

The hearse was carried by four young men. (There may be 8 pallbearers,

2:Maretzki & Maretzki E-5 (1954-1955) 1963 AC7 Okinawa AC7
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In addition to meeting with physical and emotional needs, the child must be protected from the nurtured by the numerous supernatural forces in the form of malevolent and benevolent spirits which operate to influence the course of an individual's life. There are lucky and unlucky days, years, and tides, which are believed to determine the fate of a person. Females born in the year of the monkey are considered unlucky, for they are thought to outlive their male contemporaries. Men dislike marrying them. Supplications are made and precautionary measures taken by adults to secure the newborn's life, happiness, and health.

Ancestral spirits influence the development and fate of the child. Occasionally a child who is the victim of ill health during his early years is adopted by a couple whose ancestral spirits are thought to be more favorable than his own on the dictate of the fortune teller. By mysterious calculations involving birth dates of the principals, the fortune teller uncovers some incompatibility and advises adoption. The child remains with his parents but worships the ancestral spirits of his adoptive parents. In this way parents seek to ensure the well-being of the child.

Mother interview data indicate the awareness of Taira people of the variations in personality among children of one family. Adults do in a large measure adapt their actions in accord with these differences. They recognize hereditary influences, but although a mother may comment on the similarity of temperament with regard to her child and other members in the family or kin group, there are no ideas or beliefs that the souls of deceased are inherited. Usually the mother, in describing the characteristics of the child, rarely goes beyond likenesses which can be attributed to herself or her husband. She is at a loss to explain the "very different child." "My eldest son has my nasty temper whereas my second daughter is not like either of us, very strange. All the others have a little of myself and my husband in them. We often wonder how it is that she is so unlike either of us."

A child born with two cowlicks predicates a "problem" to his parents. Parents often explain, "Oh, this child is very naughty, for as you can see, he has two cowlicks." Children often search each other's heads, and on discovering two instead of the single whorl, they shout in glee, "Naughty, naughty." One 4-year-old cuddled and hugged his newborn sister after searching her head. "You have two cowlicks just like me! You and I are 'naughty,' " he whispered to her. Turning to the adults in the room, he snapped his small bright eyes and grinned impishly as he reported his discovery joyfully.

Twin births are disliked only because they place a burden on the

845 mother and family. "Nursing two babies at once on a diet as meager as ours is too difficult," explain the mothers, and they also point out that multiple births cause great economic hardships.

854 Infancy in Taira, in congruence with the concept of the nature of an infant, is a period of indulgent and affectionate nurturance. Except for a brief period during the initial month of life, the baby is rarely left to lie on the floor to sleep, and during this period the mother or grandmother is always close by to pick him up at the slightest whimper. From the time he is a month old until shortly before the arrival of the next baby, he is constantly carried during the daytime on the back of another, an adult or an older child. At night he sleeps next to his mother. His carriers include parents, paternal grandparents, unmarried aunts and uncles, older siblings in an extended household, and parents and older siblings in a nuclear household.

854 Those mothers who have read or heard that it is good for babies to
178 cry occasionally never have an opportunity to test it. "The old people
853 feel sorry for the baby and insist upon prompt attention," complain young mothers with "modern" ideas. The immediate response of adult and child caretakers to an infant's cry is to take him to his mother, who promptly nurses him. The breast is thrust into his mouth whether he is hungry or not. "Pitiful!" exclaim old grandmothers and rush to pick up the infant. More often than not it is the newborn's father or older sibling who orders the mother to do so with the same expression.

854 There is the belief that the first four months are a trying period in
853 which the "bad" habit of crying is formed; therefore every attempt is made to keep the infant comfortable and quiet. One mother described how she and her husband took turns eating their evening meal because one of the children had formed such a bad habit. "We would take turns carrying him and walking around the yard and eating. There was nothing else we could do. Both of us did not like to have babies cry." Another mother told of how her whole family converged on her every time the infant whimpered. "Hurry and nurse it . . . must be hungry . . . may be sick . . . so pitiful!" they would say to her.

853 It is imperative that a mother have enough milk. She is given special
[262] foods and told not to get overtired. She is advised to avoid foods that could pass on properties which might be harmful to the child. Sometimes she has more milk than her infant can consume. One such fortunate mother nursed the baby of a mother whose milk supply had failed. Women who have a plentiful supply of milk are also sought out when mothers find it necessary to work at some distance from the village. In these cases reciprocal arrangements are made so the baby need not go hungry for very long.